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The Story of Destiny

Volume I

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# The Stone of Destiny and Ireland of Old

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LEBANON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL 24, 1924

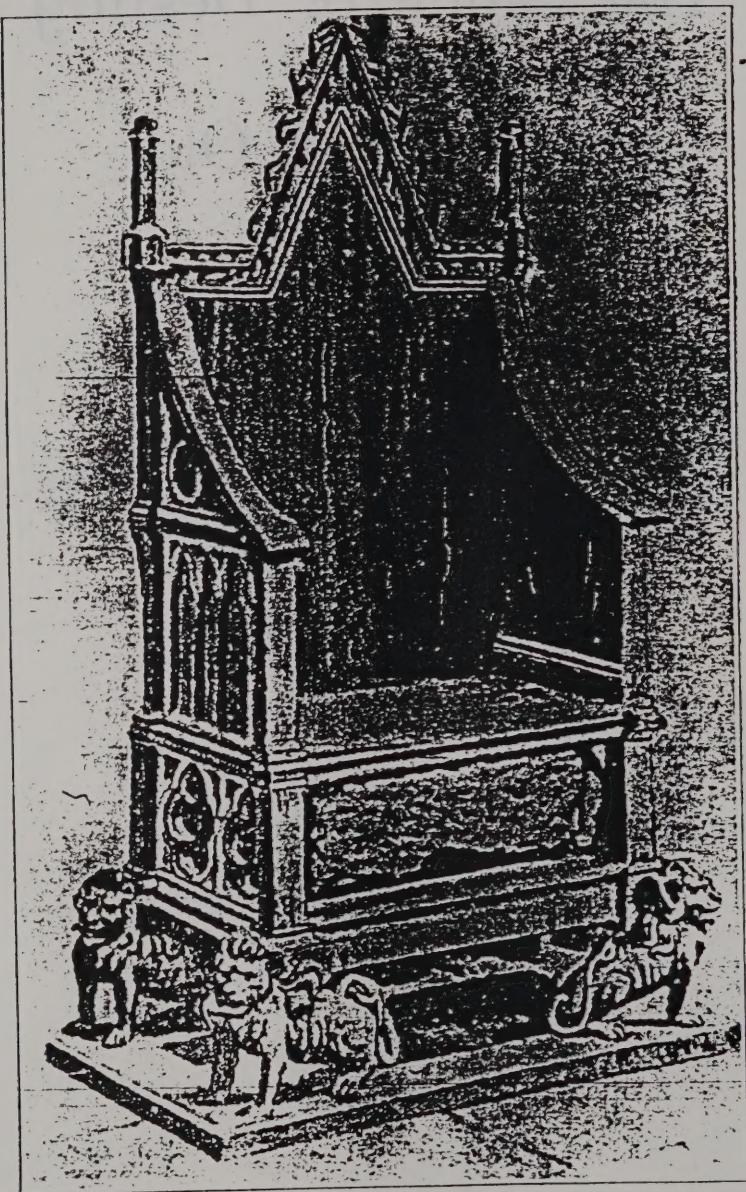
By

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LEBANON, PENNSYLVANIA

VOL. IX

No. 1



THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE  
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# The Stone of Destiny and Ireland of Old

## Foreword

Living, as we do, in a Pennsylvania-German locality, whose history is so largely made up of the deeds and lives of these people, we are apt to forget that we have in our midst others of Irish blood, some of whom are descended from the great kings and chieftains of that nation and are able to trace their ancestry back to remote ages, even to our first parents in the Garden of Eden.

When we think of Ireland we are apt to picture it to ourselves as we have known it in recent years, when it had become a land composed, largely, of poverty-stricken peasants, void of active commercial life, desolate in appearance; and filled with turmoil, fightings and bloodshed. We fail to realize that, at one time, it was probably the most civilized country in the world, a leader in the arts, in science and general culture.

The Gaelic race are descended from Gaodhal (Gael), who was fifth in descent from Japhet, the son of Noah, and was a contemporary of Moses, the great Law Giver, a descendant of Shem.

Japhet was the ancestor of the Scythians, a name applied to those nations who displayed skill in hunting and the use of the bow. The word is claimed to be derived from the Celtic word *sciot*, which signifies a dart

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or arrow. They worshipped the sun, moon and winds, their chief deity being Odin, or Wodin, who was their god of war.

They did not dwell in cities nor houses, but in tents, and were continually roving. So the children of Japhet dispersed themselves largely throughout our present Europe. Those in which we are interested made their way to Egypt, thence to Crete, from Crete to Scythia in Europe, that vast tract of country north of the Danube and Black Sea, from Scythia to Africa, across to Spain and from Spain to Ireland.

Having promptly departed for their new homes, it is claimed that they took no part with the children of Shem and Ham in their impious attempt at the building of the Tower of Babel.

So careful were these Milesian colonists of their genealogies that they maintained a class of men to record and preserve them. These were the Bards and Seanachies (historians) of Ireland. These lists were repeated by them at high solemnities and there verified, being passed from generation to generation until writing came to the aid of the chroniclers, when they were duly recorded and preserved.

From these documents was compiled, by the celebrated monarch, King Cormac Mac Art, in the third century of the Christian Era, the history of the Irish Nation from the earliest period. This work was called the "Psalter of Tara". In the 17th century a further compilation of Ireland's Ancient History was made by the "Four Masters", learned antiquarians selected for that purpose, and their work was translated into English during the reigns of Kings George the Fourth and William the Fourth.

Read a portion of the "Four Masters" in English

### The Stone of Destiny

From this wonderful work I have selected a mere bit to form a paper which I trust may be not only interesting but may prove of value to those of us who can boast of Celtic blood in our veins.

I have taken that part which tells of the Stone of Destiny and which gives some account of the royal city of Tara and Ireland of old.

When Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, rejected the wise counsel of his father's old associates and acted upon the foolish advice of his young companions, the kingdom became rent in twain, but two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remaining faithful to him as the Kingdom of Judah.

The remaining ten tribes of Israel separated from the Temple at Jerusalem and its religious influences, lapsed into idolatry and wickedness to such an extent that God not only abandoned them but He also determined to punish them. This brought about the Assyrian Captivity, B. C., 725, from which they never returned, and so lost their identity that, today, they are spoken of as "The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel".

Scattered indeed they were, but were they all lost?

In between the other tribes of Israel, and those of Dan and Simeon, were Judah and Benjamin, with whom the King of Assyria was at peace, and whose territory he was not likely to invade. Sailors and shipowners as were the Danites, the Irish record states that, instead of falling into captivity, they took to their vessels, sailed away and, in time, reached Ireland, where, for one hundred and ninety-seven years, as the Tuatha-de-Danans, they reigned as its kings, until conquered by the Milesians.

They are recorded as being highly civilized, skilled

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in the arts and sciences; hence they were considered as "magicians". In after ages they were believed to have continued to live in hills, or raths, as the "good people", or fairies, of Ireland. Their magic, however, consisted in the exercise of the mechanical arts, of which those who had previously invaded the country were then ignorant.

Ogma, the father of one of these kings, was the inventor of the "Ogham" (owan) alphabet, an occult manner of writing used by the ancient Irish. Its letters are all denominated by the names of trees and shrubs indigenous to Ireland.

It was not long before the Kingdom of Judah followed in the footsteps of idolatrous Israel, notwithstanding repeated warnings from the prophet Jeremiah, God's messenger. The climax came in the year B. C. 588, when the King of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, after a siege of eighteen months which brought untold suffering to its inhabitants, captured Jerusalem, and with it King Zedekiah while attempting to escape. His eyes were put out, but not before he had seen the death of all his sons, and his people were dragged into a captivity which was to last seventy years. Jeremiah, who had foretold all which happened, was not only spared, but was allowed to remain behind in peace, and free to go whither he pleased.

Now follows the fact with which we are most interested.

While the sons of Zedekiah were all slain, his daughters escaped. Mahomedan authors say they fled into a part of the Temple, where they were secreted. When all danger had passed, in company with the prophet and Baruch they fled into Egypt, taking with them a sacred stone which was removed from its place in the Temple. Today it rests in Westminster Abbey, London. For

ages it has been the coronation seat of the Kings of Ireland, Scotland and Great Britain. Why so sacred? Because on it Jacob rested his head outside the city of Luz, when its gates had been closed for the night, and it was then he saw the angels ascending and descending the ladder at the top of which stood God Himself.

Not only was it Jacob's Pillow, a resting place for the patriarch's head, not only has it been a coronation stone for kings, but it is a Stone of Destiny because a prophetic Rune has attached itself to it for some 2400 years to this effect:

"Cioniodh Scruit Taor an fine,  
Man has breag an Fais dine,  
Mar a oh fruignid an Lia Fail,  
Dlighid faitneas do grabhail."

This distich, which is in the Irish Celtic Dialect, has been rendered by Sir Walter Scott, thus:

"Unless the Fates are faithless grown,  
And Prophet's voice be vain,  
Wnere'er is found this Sacred Stone,  
The Wanderer's Race shall reign."

The understood meaning of which is that, so long as one of the Race, duly confirmed to Monarchical Right on that Stone, shall have possession of The Stone, that such combination will secure to that Race the right, and assure the possession of Monarchy; in fact, that it will command Destiny. So it is that the word "Phail" has become modern Irish for the word "Fate".

The Stone has never received its proper meaning in Irish. It was not called the "Stone Wonderful", as it should have been. It was called the "Stone Destiny". They indicated the effect, not knowing aught of the cause.

It is called Lia Fail because that is the name by which it was always known in Ireland in Pagan times,

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from when it first arrived in the country. "Lia," or "Leag" (Lee-ahch), signifying "a stone" in Irish, and "Fail" being, as above indicated, understood to mean "destiny". But, although the word "Lia" is Irish, the word "Phail" is Hebrew, and is, in itself, a Scriptural word, and of the highest, deepest, theological import. It signifies "wonderful", and is that word which is always used in Holy Writ to convey to the mind of man the most inscrutable character of act and thought and power of the Godhead.

Not of meteoric origin, as many have maintained, it is a block of red sandstone, containing an unusual proportion of iron. It was once carved, gilded and painted, but these decorations have entirely disappeared. For 2450 years in succession kings have been crowned upon it. When so used in modern times, it has been covered with a cloth of gold. According to the legend, the stone used to give forth musical sounds when a rightful monarch sat on it, and remained silent under a usurper.

Taking ship in Egypt, our fugitives started for "the isles of the sea" prophesied by Isaiah, but it becoming disabled, were forced to take refuge in a port of Spain. The king of the country, hearing that it was a ship of "goodly store", seized the stone; whereupon, when the vessel was properly caulked, two men, presumably Jeremiah and Baruch, regained the stone, carried it aboard and escaped, finally reaching that "land of traffic", where it was to be "set in a city of merchants". That land was Ireland, and that city the "Royal City" of Tara.

Eochaidh 2nd, better known as "Ollamh Fodhla", one of Ireland's greatest monarchs, was then on the throne. To him was given in marriage Tephi, the daughter of the Jewish King Zedekiah, and here, remote from the scene of the early life and manhood of Shem and Japhet, were united once more two branches of Noah's

## THE STONE OF DESTINY 9

many descendants, while the sceptre of King David, which had fallen so low in his own land, was raised again in power and majesty on a distant green island by a princess sprung from his loins, where it has flourished to this day.

"Tephi" was her name. She is said to have been very beautiful. While the name so appears in the record, it does not occur in Irish at all, but is Hebrew, and a pet name, like "Violet", denoting the beauty and fragrance of all delicious fruits. "Apples of gold in pictures of silver," as sung by King Solomon.

Through her efforts, her husband was led to renounce the worship of Baal and to accept and recognize the God of the Hebrews. To provide for its perpetuity and maintenance he established a "College of Ollams", i. e., a "School of the Prophets".

That the nuptials were duly celebrated, the following poem, translated out of Irish, and now more than 1000 years old, fully establishes. Also that the King most faithfully adhered to all that he promised, was affectionately acknowledged on the premature death-bed of this most charming creature, whose like, it appears, never was before seen:-

"Tephi was her name: she excelled all virgins!  
"Wretched for him who had to entomb her.  
"Sixty feet of correct admeasurement  
"Were marked as a Sepulchre to enshrine her."

The stone was placed upon the Hill of Tara, and became the usual coronation seat of the Irish kings. Five hundred and thirty years after Christ, Fergus (son of Muireadach) conveyed the stone to Scotland. In process of time it was built into the wall of Dunstaffnage Castle, whence it was removed by King Kenneth, who, in A. D. 850, deposited it in the church of Scone. On this stone the Scottish kings were crowned.

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It was looked upon with wonderful veneration by the Scottish people, and was the subject of both prose and poetry. King Kenneth, when enclosing the stone in a wooden box, caused to be engraven on it: "Hi fallat fatum Scotti hunc quocunque locatum inveniunt lapidem sequare tenentur ibidem." A free translation reads: "If the fates deceive not, wherever this stone is located the Scots shall monarch of this realm be crowned," and it is noteworthy that these prophecies were fulfilled in the person of James 1st of England.

King Edward 1st, having conquered the Scots, who, up to his reign, had been giving the English a great deal of trouble, determined to wrest from them any tokens of independency, and consequently took with him to England the regalia of Scotland, and, at the same time, this old and famous stone. He caused it to be deposited in the Abbey of Westminster, its present resting place, and where it has quietly lain for the past six hundred years, serving during that period as the coronation stone upon which the long line of kings and queens of England have been crowned.

From James 1st the prophecy has continued down to Queen Victoria, as descended from his granddaughter, and from her to his present Majesty, King George IV, in confirmation of his Hereditary Title in regular and undoubtedly descent from that Irish King, Eochaid 2nd, the crowned Heremonn at Tara of the Irish Federation about B.C 620. This descent was admitted, declared and publicly proclaimed by King James 1st, at the Council Table at Whitehall, April 21, 1613, where he said: "There is a double cause why I should be careful of the welfare of that People (the Irish): first, as King of England, by reason of the long possession the Crown of England hath had of that land; and, also, as King of Scotland, for the ancient kings of Scotland are descended from the kings of Ireland."

### The Milesian Line

It has been said that Eochaid 2nd, or Ollamh Fodhla, the husband of Tephi, was of that great line of Irish monarchs, the Milesian, which, under one hundred and eighty-three kings, ruled over Ireland, as the successors of the Tuatha-de-Danans, for 2885 years, until their submission to King Henry, 2nd, of England, A. D. 1171.

Let us recall the fact that Japhet, the son of Noah, was the father of the Scythian people. To him was given the region north of the Danube and Black Sea. It was these people that gave birth to the Irish Nation through Magog, his son.

About 300 years after the flood, which occurred B. C. 2349, Partholan, the son of Magog, and his followers, came to Ireland and located chiefly in Ulster, in Donegal and in the County Dublin. They had been there but some thirty years when nearly the whole people perished by a plague, thousands of them being buried in a common tomb, in Tallaght, a place near Dublin, the name meaning "Tam-Laght", or the "Plague Sepulchre".

Then came the Nemedians, also from Scythia, 318 years after the birth of Abraham and B. C. 2153. They continued in Ireland for 217 years, within which time a colony of theirs went into the northern parts of Scotland under the conduct of their leader, Briottan Maol, from whom Britain takes its name, and not from Brutus, as some persons have believed. They were located chiefly in Ulster, at Armagh, and in Derry and Donegal.

Now the regular current of events changes, and the Fomorians appear on the scene. The Fomorians ("fogh", Irish, "plundering;" "muir," "the sea") were a "sept descended from Cham (Ham), son of Noah, who lived by pyracie and spoile of other nations, and were in those days very troublesome to the whole world," so say the

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"Annals of Clonmacnoise". They are considered to have come from the north of Africa, and to have been some of the Phoenicians whose descendants afterwards there founded the city of Carthage, and, in Spain, the cities of Gahdir, or Gades (Cadiz) and Kartobah (now Cordova).

As Sidon, in Phoenicia, was a maritime city in the time of Joshua, and its people expert navigators; and as the Phoenicians, Sidonians and Tyrians, in those early ages, were celebrated for their commercial intercourse with Greece, Italy, Gaul, Spain and Britain, there is nothing whatever improbable in a colony of them having sailed from Africa to Ireland, whose coming from "Africa" may have led to the belief that they were "descended from Cham (Ham)", as their commercial intercourse with other nations may have led to their being considered "pirates".

They are represented as a race of giants, and were celebrated as having been great builders in stone. They had their chief fortress on "Tor Inis," or "The Island of the Tower", now known as "Tory Island", which is off the coast of Donegal; and another at the Giants' Causeway, which in Irish was called "Cloghan-na-Fomoraigh", or the "Causeway of the Fomorians", as it was supposed to have been constructed by this people, who, from their great strength and stature, were, as above mentioned, called "giants"; hence the term "Giants' Causeway". It is a stupendous natural curiosity of volcanic origin, situated on the sea coast of Antrim, and consists of a countless number of basaltic columns of immense height, which, from the regularity of their formation and arrangement, have the appearance of a vast work of art, and, hence, were supposed to have been constructed by giants.

Nemedh, King of the Nemedians, improved the soil

and cut down twelve woods, but was constantly at war with the Fomorians, or "Pirates", so called.

He gained three victories over them, but was utterly defeated in a fourth and desperate battle fought in Leinster, where most of his army was cut to pieces, his son, Art, born in Ireland, was slain, together with Iobh-chon, the son of Stairn. The defeat broke the heart of Nemeth, so that he, with two thousand of his people, died at Oileanarda Nemeidh, now the great island in Cork Harbor.

After this defeat the Pirates followed up their success, making themselves masters of Ireland, their chief fort being at "Tor Inis", now "Tory Island", whence they issued to prey on the Nemedians, robbing them of their women, children, and produce of all kinds.

Seeing how grievously they were oppressed, the Nemedians determined to make another effort to free themselves. Collecting a great army, they attacked the Fomorians, slew their general, with his children and garrison, but scarcely had the conflict ended when the Fomorian admiral, More, unexpectedly appeared with sixty sail, on his return voyage from Africa, landed at Tory and made for the mainland, where he was opposed by the Nemedians.

The two armies fought on the strand, killing each other until the tide at length swept off most of the Nemedians. Of the Fomorians, More, with the better part of his forces, escaped to their ships, landed soon after and took possession of Ireland.

After the Fomorians became masters of the country, the Nemedians were reduced to slavery and compelled to pay a great annual tribute, on the first day of winter, consisting of corn, cattle, milk, and other provisions.

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To escape the grievous oppression which had now become their lot, the Nemedians determined to leave Ireland.

Three different bands of them emigrated, with their respective leaders. One section took refuge in England (or Scotland), which obtained its name of "Britain" from their chieftain, as already mentioned.

Another made its way into Greece, where they were enslaved and obtained the name of "Firbolgs", or "bag-men", from the leather bags which they were compelled to carry.

After years of bondage in Greece, the five sons of Della Mac Loich, then leader of the Firbolgs, or Firvolgians seized on some shipping, and, with five thousand followers, including their wives, quitted Greece and made for Ireland, where they landed 216 years after the death of Nemehd. On their arrival they divided Ireland into four parts:

Slainge got the central eastern part, now nearly corresponding to Leinster.

Rughraide governed the northern part, now Ulster.  
Geanann ruled the western part, and  
Gann the eastern part of Munster.

"Slainge (Slane) was he by whom Teamor (or Tara) was first raised."

One hundred and fifty monarchs reigned in Tara from that period until its abandonment in the reign of Diarmod, who was the 133rd monarch of Ireland and King of Meath.

The Firvolgians ruled over Connaught down to the third century, when King Cormac Mac Art, the 115th monarch of Ireland, attacked and defeated the forces of Aodh or Hugh, son of Garadh, King of Connaught, who

was the last King of the Firbolg race in Ireland, the sovereignty of Connaught being then transferred to the Milesians of the race of Heremon.

These people were chiefly employed in agricultural pursuits; they were builders of the earliest circular forts, in which but few stones were employed; they finally became the peasantry of various parts of Ireland. They were a small, straight-haired, swarthy race, dark or black hair, talkative, strolling, guileful, unsteady, disturbers of every council and assembly. It is remarkable that their eyes were blue-gray and their eye lashes of a dark colour.

Although reduced to the ranks of farmers and peasants, they were still very numerous, and, to this day, a great many of the peasantry, particularly in Connaught, are considered to be of Firbolg origin.

The remaining party sailed to the north of Europe, where their superior civilization had a great effect on the hospitable natives. Settling, probably, in Denmark, they obtained possession of four cities as schools of learning (colleges), in which the natives were taught what ignorant historians termed "diabolical learning".

Having lived for some time in this country, they sailed to the north of Scotland, where they remained for seven years and then went to Ireland, landing in Ulster. Here they made a "Beal fire" of their shipping, as they intended never to return.

A thick fog shrouded their arrival and a deep woods covered their march into the interior of the country. They then sent ambassadors to the Firvolg King, Eochaidh, to fight or deliver up to them the government of the island. A desperate battle ensued, in which the Firvolgians were totally defeated, ten thousand of them being slain, together with Eochad, son of King Eiric,

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who was buried on the seashore, a cairn of large stones being erected over him as a sepulchral monument, which may remain to this day.

In this battle the leader of the invaders, Nuadh, had his hand cut off; after a period of seven years the wound was healed, and a silver hand so skillfully fitted to the arm that he was able to use it just as if life and feeling were infused into it. This shows the mechanical skill of these people, long since lost, and which modern science cannot reach.

These conquerors were what we know as the Tuatha-de-Danans, and of which the tribe of Dan were a part, if we are to believe the ancient claim to that effect.

After a few more battles they became possessed of Ireland, which they ruled until the arrival of the Milesians, who conquered them. The Firvolgians having assisted the Milesians in the conquest, were, in consequence, restored by them to a great part of their former possessions, particularly in Connaught, in which province they were ruled by their own kings down to the third century, when the Monarch, Cormac Mac Art, brought them under subjection and annexed Connaught to his Kingdom.

After the decisive battle, in which their king and queen were slain, the chiefs of the Tuatha-de-Danans resolved to retire to their native hills, and to distribute themselves over the plains and hills of Erinn.

It is worthy to note that nearly all of these princes, chiefs and princesses are still feared and courted by the peasantry of Ireland.

They were a tall race, warlike, energetic and progressive, great physicians, fair-complexioned, open-minded and workers in metals. They built the cemeteries at Howth, New Grange, Louth and Slieve-na-Cailleagh.

And now the shifting of scenes bring upon the stage the Milesian line of monarchs, greatest of all Irish Kings, with one of whom, Eochaidh, 2d, or Ollamh Fodhla, the husband of the Jewish princess Tephi, the Stone of Destiny so largely figures.

There are many interesting events in the lives of the early rulers of this line well worth mentioning.

It will be remembered that Magog, the son of Japhet, was the father of the Scythian race, of which the Milesians were a part.

Phoenius (or Fenius) Farsaidh, his grandson, was King of Scythia at the same time that Ninus ruled the Assyrian Empire. Being a wise man, and desirous to learn the languages that not long before had confounded the builders of the Tower of Babel, he employed able and learned men to go among the dispersed multitude to acquire their several tongues; who, sometime after, returning well skilled in what they went for, the King erected a school in the valley of Senaar, near the city of Aeothena, in the forty-second year of the reign of Ninus, the founder of Nineveh, and the Assyrian Empire, whose widow and queen, Semiramis, built the great city of Babylon, with its hanging gardens.

Having continued there, with his younger son, Niul, for twenty years, he returned home to his kingdom, which, at his death, he left to his eldest son, Nenuall, giving to Niul no other patrimony than his learning and the benefit of said school.

The Phoenicians who founded the city of Carthage in Africa, also Cadiz and Cordova in Spain, were his descendants.

We have heard much, in our days, of the Fenians of Ireland. They were the descendants of this Phoenius

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(or Fenius) Farsaidh, and were so named after him. It is but another form of the word "Phoenicians".

The Fenian warriors were a famous military force, forming the standing national militia for the protection of the monarchy, instituted in Ireland long before the Christian era, and brought to the greatest perfection in the reign of Cormac Mac Art, monarch of Ireland in the third century. Into this military organization none were admitted but select men of the greatest activity, strength, stature, perfect form and valor. When the force was complete, it consisted of seven catha, that is battalions or legions, each containing three thousand men, making twenty-one thousand for each of the five provinces, or a total of some one hundred thousand for the entire kingdom in time of war. They were entirely and completely disciplined, each battalion having its own band of musicians and bards to animate them in battle and celebrate their feats of arms.

In time the Fenians revolted, many conflicts ensued, terminating in the terrible battle of Gaura, in the county of Meath. As a result of this, the Irish monarchy tottered towards its fall. The Irish Kings were never able to muster, thereafter, a national army equal in valor and discipline to those heroes, either to cope with foreign foes or to reduce to subjection rebellious provincial kings and princes, nor to make a stand against the Danish and Anglo-Norman invaders of after times.

Of course it is understood that the so-called Fenians of these years have merely assumed the name of those valiant men of the past.

After Fenius had returned to Scythia, his son Niul continued some time at Aeothena, teaching the languages and other laudable sciences.

At this time there sat on the throne of Egypt

Armesses Miamun, or Rameses-Miamun (B. C. 1577). It was he, called in the Scriptures Pharaoh, who so grievously oppressed the Israelites, and whose son, Amenophis, was forced to allow them to leave for their "Promised Land".

Hearing of his great learning, Rameses invited Niul to come to Egypt, and became so greatly pleased with him that he gave him his daughter Scota in marriage, whence the name "Scots" applied to their posterity. It is claimed that she was the same who rescued Moses from death in the river.

The river Nile is said to have been named after him.

It was this Niul who employed Gaodhal (Gael), son of Ethor, a learned and skilful man, to compose, or rather to refine and adorn, the language, called "Bearla Tobbai", which was common to all Niul's posterity, and afterwards called "Gaodhilg" (or Gaelic) in honor of its composer or refiner.

Gaodhal (or Gathelus) the eldest son of Niul, was the ancestor of the "Clan-na-Gael".

Having rescued Moses from the river, it was but natural that Niul and Scota should take a great interest in his welfare and education. The affection which Moses entertained for them was also bestowed upon their son, Gaodhal. In his youth, we are told that Gaodhal was stung in the neck by a serpent. He was immediately brought to Moses, who, laying his rod upon the wounded place, instantly cured it, leaving a green scar. Gaodhal received a further blessing in that no venomous beast can live any time where his posterity should inhabit, which has been the case in Ireland.

Such was the intimacy between Moses and Niul that it has been asserted Moses invited him to go on board one of Pharaoh's ships on the Red Sea to witness the

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miracle to be performed by the "Great I Am", the God of the Israelites, in their deliverance from Egyptian bondage, but, on account of his being the son-in-law of Pharaoh, Niul, while sympathizing with the Israelites in their great affliction, asked Moses to excuse him from declining the invitation. Then Moses held Niul excused. Because of this sympathy for the Israelites, the descendants of Niul were eventually forced to leave Egypt.

The animosity of the Egyptians was visited upon Sruth, the grandson of Gaodhal. After many conflicts, wherein most of the colony lost their lives, they fled the country, and, after many traverses, reached the island of Creta (now called Candia), where Sruth died.

Some of the number remained in Creta, others migrated to Africa and, later, built Carthage, while still others sailed to the land of Canaan, where, on the island of Sor, off its coast, they founded the city of Tyre. Grateful for the sympathy which their forefathers had experienced from Niul in Egypt, the Israelites allotted to them a tract of country in the Northwest part of Palestine, which had been inhabited by the Canaanites, where they dwelt in peace and harmony with their neighbors.

It was Hiram, King of Tyre, who assisted Solomon in building the Temple.

Wanderers as had become the descendants of Sruth, some generations had gone as they went from place to place. It was then that Cachear, their magician, or Druid, foretold to his leader, Lamhfionn, that there would be no end to their peregrinations and travel until they should arrive at the western Island of Europe, now called "Ireland", which was the place destined for their future and lasting abode, and that not they, but their posterity should attain there after three hundred years.

The years passed by and their people had become settled in North Africa, in the locality of our present Tunis, when Brath, their chieftain, recalling the prophecy of the Druid; departed with a numerous fleet to seek their new home.

After some time he landed in Spain, and, by strong hand, settled himself and his colony in Galicia, in the northern part of that country.

His son Breoghan (or Brigus) became King of Galicia, Andalusia, Murcia, Castile and Portugal, all of which he conquered. He built Breoghan's Tower, or "Brigantia", in Galicia, the city of Braganza in Portugal, and the Kingdom of Castile was then also called "Brigia" after him. It is considered that the name "Castile" was derived from the figure of a "Castle" which Brigus bore for his arms on his banner. He sent a colony into Britain, which settled in what are now the counties of York, Lancaster, Durham, Westmoreland and Cumberland, and, after him, were called "Brigantes". Their posterity gave formidable opposition to the Romans at the time of their invasion of Britain.

We have seen the derivation of many Irish names now familiar to us. Whence came the familiar name "Milesians."

It was that of the grandson of Brigus, who was called Galamh (Galav), or Milesius.

In his youth and during his father's time, he went from Spain into Scythia, where he was kindly received by the King of that country, who gave him his daughter in marriage and appointed him General of his forces. In this capacity Milesius defeated the King's enemies, gained much fame and the love of all his monarch's subjects. His growing greatness and popularity excited against him the jealousy of the ruler, who, fearing the

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worst, resolved on privately despatching him out of the way, not daring to attempt so doing openly. Admonished of such intentions Milesius slew him, quitted Scythia and retired into Egypt with a fleet of sixty sail. Nectonibus, the Pharaoh then on the throne, being informed of his arrival and of his great valor, wisdom and conduct in arms, made him General of all his forces against the King of Ethiopia, then invading his country. Here again he was victorious, forcing the emperor to submit to the conqueror's own terms of peace, because of which he found great favor with Pharaoh, who gave him, being then a widower, his daughter in marriage, and kept him eight years afterwards in Egypt.

During this time he employed the most able and ingenuous persons among his people to be instructed in the several trades, arts and sciences used in Egypt, in order to have them taught to the rest of his people upon his return to Spain.

At length Milesius took leave of his father-in-law and steered toward Spain, where, in time, he arrived, to the great joy and comfort of his people, who were much harassed by the rebellion of the natives and by the intrusion of other foreign nations which forced their way in after his father's death and during his own long absence. In fifty-four battles, victoriously fought, he routed, destroyed and totally extirpated his enemies out of the country, which he settled in peace and quietness.

Then came a great dearth and famine of twenty-six years continuance, occasioned partly by the former troubles which prevented the people from cultivating and manuring the ground, and in part from lack of rain to moisten the earth, but Milesius superstitiously believed it had fallen upon them as a judgment and punishment of their gods because of their negligence in seeking the

country destined for their final abode, as told by Cachear, the Druid, the time limited by the prophecy for the accomplishment thereof being now nearly, if not fully, expired.

To expiate his fault he sent his uncle, Ithe, with a force of men, to bring him an account of these western isles. Landing in Ireland he was honorably received and entertained by the three Danan brothers then ruling it. He expressed himself strongly in praise of their delightful, pleasant and fruitful country, and, later, took his leave.

No sooner was he gone than the brothers began to reflect on the high commendations which Ithe gave the island, and suspecting his design of bringing others to invade it, they resolved to prevent such an occurrence. Pursuing him with a strong party, they overtook him, fought and routed his men and wounded himself to death, before his son and the rest of his men, who had been left on shipboard, could come to his rescue.

Because of this deed, Milesius made great preparations to invade Ireland, not only to avenge the death of his uncle, but also in obedience to the will of his gods, but, before he could effect that object, he died, leaving the care and charge of the expedition to his eight sons. The eight brothers were neither unmindful nor negligent in the execution of their father's command, but, soon after his death, with a numerous fleet, well manned and equipped, set forth from Brigantia, in Spain, and sailed prosperously to the coasts of Ireland.

Here they met many difficulties and various chances before they could land, occasioned by the diabolical arts, sorceries and enchantments used by the Tuatha-de-Danans to obstruct their landing, for, by their magic art, they enchanted the island so that it appeared to the

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Milesians in the form of a hog, with no way to come at it (whence the island, among the many other names it had before, was called "Muc-Inis", or "Hog Island"). In addition they raised so great a storm that the fleet was thereby totally dispersed and many of them cast away. Five of the eight brothers lost their lives, among them Ir, the ancestor of Eochaidh, 2nd, whose vessel was driven upon the island since called "Scellig Mhicheal", off the Kerry Coast, where it split on a rock and sank with all on board.

It is interesting, in our day ,to read of the ancient superstitions which ascribed to the arts of the supposed Danan magicians the natural events just related.

The surviving brothers were Heber, Heremon and Amergin, who was their arch-priest, Druid, or magician, and with them was Heber Donn, the son of Ir, who also survived.

Several bloody battles were fought, the Danans overcome, and the Milesians became the Kings of Ireland. In succeeding quarrels among themselves both Heber and Amergin were killed, and Heremon became sole monarch, who made a new division of the land amongst his comrades and friends, with one part to the son of his brother Heber, and one part, the present Ulster, to Heber Donn, the son of Ir.

From these three brothers, Heremon, Heber and Ir (Amergin dying without issue), are descended all the Milesian Kings of Ireland and Scotland.

This invasion, conquest or plantation of Ireland, by the Milesian or Scottish Nation, took place the next year after Solomon began the foundation of the Temple in Jerusalem, B.C. 1005. We may thus infer that Solomon was contemporary with Milesius of Spain, and that the Pharaoh of Egypt who gave his daughter in marriage to

Solomon, was the Pharaoh who conferred on Milesius of Spain the hand of another daughter.

Milesius bore three lions in his shield and on his standard, in memory of the fact that, in his younger days, while in Africa, by his cunning and valor, in one morning he killed three lions.

After the conquest, Heremon, Heber and Heber Donn, son of Ir, divided these amongst themselves, each taking one, but of different colors, which the chiefs of their posterity continue to this day, and which have been united in the banner of Great Britain to the original number, symbolizing, in its monarch, the union in one person of the blood of the original three brothers.

We now reach the connecting link with the title of our paper, in the person of Eochaidh, 2nd, better known as "Ollamh Fodhla," in the seventh generation from his ancestor, Ir, the husband of Tephi, the Jewish Princess, who brought with her to Tara, the Royal City of Ireland, the sacred "Stone of Destiny." He was one of the greatest and most famous monarchs of Ireland. He began his reign about B.C. 620 (computing the time as given in the Bible) and died at an advanced age in his own "Mur" (or house), in Tara. As his life was so largely identified with that famous city, I have thought it might be of value and interest to give some account of its history.

#### TARA

Tara, the Royal City and scene of so much of the history of ancient Ireland, was located twenty-one miles northwest of the city of Dublin, county of Meath.

The Hill of Tara is large, verdant, level at the top, and extremely beautiful; though not very high, it commands extensive and most magnificent prospects over the great and fertile plains of Meath.

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Tara had various names in ancient times. It was first founded as a royal residence by Slainge, one of the Firvolgian Kings, and was afterwards called "Liath Druim", or "The Hill of Liath"; the Tuatha-de-Danan Kings next resided there, when, by them, it was called "Cathan Crofin", or "The Fortress of Crofin", after one of the Danan queens; by the Milesian Kings it got the name "Teamur", or "Teamhair," anglicized "Teamor" and "Tara", and latinized "Teamora" or "Teamoria."

At Tara the ancient records and chronicles of the Kingdom were carefully preserved; these records and chronicles formed the basis of the ancient history of Ireland, called the "Psalter of Tara," which was brought to complete accuracy in the reign of the monarch Cormac Mac Art, in the third century; and, from the Psalter of Tara, and other records, was compiled, in the ninth century, by Cormac Mac Cuélenan, Archbishop of Cashel and King of Munster, the celebrated work called the "Psalter of Cashel."

At Tara was the building called "Mur Ollamhan", or "The House of the Learned," in which resided the bards, brehons, and other learned men; there was likewise the "Rath-na-Seanadh," which signifies either the "Fort of the Conventions," or of the "Synods," and said to be so-called from great gatherings held there at different times by St. Patrick, St. Adamnan, St. Brendan and St. Ruadhan; there was also the "Rath-na-Riogh," or "The Fortress of the Kings"; Drumha-na-m Giall", or "The Mound of the Hostages," where there was a fort in which the hostages were kept; and "Dumha-na-m Ranamus," signifying the "Mound of the Warlike Women," which was probably either a habitation or a burial place of those ancient heroines; there was likewise a habitation called "Cluan Feart", or "The Sacred Retreat," which was the residence of the Vestal Virgins, or Druidesses.

In addition to the above, there were habitations at Tara for the warriors, Druids, brehons and bards, also for the provincial kings, princes and chiefs who attended to the great national conventions, wherefore the place was considered as a city in those times.

There are many remains of the mounds, raths and other antiquities still remaining at Tara, but many of these mounds and ramparts have been levelled in the course of ages. According to the ancient historians, many of the kings, queens and warriors of the early ages were buried at Tara, and several sepulchral mounds were there raised to their memory. In one of the earthen ramparts at Tara were discovered, A.D. 1810, two of the ornaments called "torques," a sort of golden collar of spiral or twisted workmanship, and worn on the necks of ancient kings and chiefs of Gaul. They were called "torc" in the Celtic language. One of the torques discovered at Tara is five feet seven inches in length and something more than twenty-seven ounces in weight. They form some of the most interesting remains of ancient Irish art.

In the third century King Cormac Mac Art built his celebrated palace at Tara. It was called "Teach Miodh-chuarta", signifying either "The House of Banquets" or "The House of Conventions", also called "Teach-na-Laech," or "The House of Heroes." It was the place in which were held the great "Feis Teamhrach," or "The Conventions of Tara. In its halls the monarchs gave their great banquets and entertained the provincial kings, princes and chiefs. It is stated that the length of the structure was three hundred feet, the breadth fifty cubits, or about eighty feet, and the height thirty cubits, or nearly fifty feet. It contained numerous apartments besides the royal bedchamber, and had on it fourteen doors. It is stated that there were seven other great habitations adjoining the palace.

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Amongst other splendid articles it is mentioned that he had, at the royal banquets, one hundred and fifty massive goblets of pure gold. The palace is considered to have been built chiefly of wood, from the oak forests so abundant in ancient times in Ireland. It was probably in part formed of stone work, making a fortress of Cyclopean architecture, composed of great stones without cement. Though a few of these stones now remain, they may have been removed during the course of ages and placed in other buildings, particularly as the Hill of Tara was easily accessible. While it is true this royal residence could not be compared with the elegant stone buildings of more modern times, yet it was distinguished for all the rude magnificence peculiar to those early ages.

The great conventions or legislative assemblies of Tara were instituted by the celebrated Ollamh Fodhla (pronounced "Ollav Fola"), meaning "The Sage of Ireland", from "Oliamh", a sage, or learned man, and "Fodhla", one of the ancient names of Ireland. He was the monarch King Eochaidh, 2nd, alleged husband of the Princess Tephi.

Celebrated in ancient history as a sage and legislator, he became eminent for learning, wisdom and excellent institutions. His historic fame has been recognized by placing his medallion in "basso relieveo", with those of Moses and other great legislators, on the interior of the dome in the Four Courts of Dublin.

Ollamh Fodhla found the government a monarchy in which the people submitted to the chief ruler (or Ard Righ) as their acknowledged head, but they were practically rendered independent of his authority, except during war, by the intervention of popular councils and the influence of provincial princes. There was no intermediate power, no opportunity of mutual appeal, and, consequently, no medium between the forcible assertion of claims on

the one hand and resistance on the other. For the purpose of remedying this defect, he instituted a senatorial assembly, resembling modern parliaments. In pagan times it was composed of the Druids, bards, provincial kings, chiefs, princes and peoples, and, after the introduction of Christianity, of provincial kings, bishops, bards, brehons, abbots, higher clergy, chiefs, princes and people.

This parliament was vested with both legislative and judicial functions on all affairs relating to the general interests of the state, and to such private concerns as minor tribunals could not settle. It met triennially, about the festival of All Saints (Samhuin), at Tara, the royal residence, where palaces were erected for the accommodation of the royal Kings and others whose duties demanded their attendance on these occasions.

Some educated members of the Masonic craft are of the opinion that at the "Feis-Teamhrach", Ollamh Fodhla first established regular Masonic meetings in Ireland, and that "Masonry" itself was first introduced into Ireland by Heremon and Heber, the first Milesian monarchs of the country.

"In this assembly," says Keating, "the ancient records and chronicles of the kingdom were perused and examined, and if any falsehoods were detected, they were instantly erased, so that posterity might not be imposed upon by false history; and the author who had the insolence to abuse the world by his relation, either by perverting matters of fact and representing them in improper colours, or by fancies and inventions of his own, was solemnly degraded from the honour of sitting in that assembly and was dismissed with a mark of infamy upon him. His works likewise were destroyed, as unworthy of credit, and were not to be admitted into the national archives, or received among the records of the kingdom.

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Nor was this expulsion the whole of his punishment, for he was liable to a fine or imprisonment, or whatever sentence the justice of the Parliament thought proper to inflict. By these methods, either out of scandal or disgrace, or of losing their estates, their pensions and endowments, and of suffering some corporal correction, the historians of those ages were induced to be very exact in their relations, and to transmit nothing to posterity but what had passed this solemn test and examination, and had been recommended by the sanction and authority of that learned assembly."

When the historical records had been thus thoroughly examined and revised they were inserted in the "Psalter of Tara."

In the book of "Nachongbhail" we read:

"Judging of the Psalter of Tara by the fragments which have come down to us, we may safely affirm that a nation which could produce such a work must have attained to no ordinary pitch of civilization and literary culture."

As may be anticipated, the services rendered by the Feis Teambrach", and the influence it exercised were of the highest importance. Many excellent laws were passed by it during the reign of Ollamh Fodhla, among the rest one making violation of female chastity punishable by death, without power of reprieve or pardon, which is valuable as proving the honorable feeling of delicacy and gallantry which even then existed in Ireland. To strike, or do any violence, or commit any robbery on a member of Parliament while attending his duties at the "Feis" was likewise punishable by death without mercy. The militia of the Kingdom (Feine, or Fenians) was placed under the control of the Parliament, and thus the nation was secured from the dangerous power which an army

always places within the grasp of ambitious or despotic rulers.

Such an institution and form of government, which the experience of the most civilized times in Europe has not excelled, are sufficient to secure their founder the reverential respect of all nations and every age. But it is not on these alone that the fame of this monarch rests. He devoted himself to the moral and intellectual improvement of his people with equal assiduity. He was the founder of those great seminaries where not only Irishmen but foreigners received gratuitus instruction in all the arts, sciences and accomplishments then known in Europe, and which subsequently contributed principally to redeem Europe from the barbarism which succeeded the downfall of the Roman Empire.

These institutions were sustained munificently by the state, and the members of the different learned professions were not only liberally endowed with property, but they were exempted from the personal services and pecuniary aid which were exacted from all other subjects during war and other public exigencies.

It was thus in the reign of Ollamh Fodhla that those privileges were first conceded to the "Fileas" (philosophers) and bards, including the musicians and genealogists, or heralds, which were afterwards so much abused as to create very dangerous disturbances, on account of the arrogance and rapacity of those classes, but which, in the earlier ages, enabled them to devote themselves entirely to the pursuit of their studies, by which many of them rose to the highest fame, and elevated the character of their country with their own.

Perhaps the greatest error in this system was the exclusion of all, save those of noble descent, from the right to practice the learned professions, and the limita-

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tion of it to those who could claim by hereditary descent. But this unwise injustice was remedied in some degree by the free participation in the benefits of instruction permitted to all ranks of people, and the strict care taken that none should be admitted to the dignity, as it was then regarded, of teaching the public, who were not properly qualified; so that even the eldest son was set aside, if unfit for the office, and some other selected.

The principal subjects of instruction were metaphysics (under which head some very ingenious and curious doctrines of mind were taught), mathematics (in which it is undeniable that the ancient Irish were great proficients), History, Poetry, Genealogy, and the Arts of Government and War.

It was Ollamh Fodhla who, by armorial bearings, originated the plan of distinguishing the different families of nobility and chief officers of State, and established it in Ireland though it was never generally adopted throughout Europe until the time of the Crusades, when, it is erroneously supposed by modern historians that the custom commenced. It is said he received the idea from the device of the dead serpent and rod of Moses, which the standard of his own family bore from the period of their sojourn in Egypt, and which always stimulated their followers to deeds of heroism. He believed that an honorable spirit of emulation would be created by these badges of distinction, and such was naturally the result.

This monarch was not only a patron of literature in his dominions, but was himself an author having written a history of his ancestors, and their adventures, down to his own times. His reign lasted forty years, and was of perfect tranquility. He died a natural death, and was quietly succeeded by his son.

It is remarkable how much men are misled by names of authority. For instance, the ancient law-givers of Greece have been extolled for centuries as the greatest sages of the world, and every portion of their labors minutely investigated and explained, through the accident of their language and philosophy having been studied by the Romans, who led the mind of Europe so long before and after the Christian era, while such characters as that of Ollamh Fodhla have been neglected and despised through the same caprice of custom.

Those who are best acquainted with them, contend that the Irish annals are far more perfect and trustworthy than those of the Greeks, and yet they are utterly unheeded. If we were to compare the labors of Ollamh Fodhla with those of Lycurgus and of Solon, it would not be difficult to prove their great superiority in all that is truly estimable. His system of government was as remarkable for its enlarged, liberal and gentle adaptation to the wants and interest of the people, and its encouragement and cultivation of their highest qualities, as that of the others was for an arbitrary, limited and harsh policy which aimed at repressing the most amiable attributes of man's nature, and only fostered its sterner and least estimable feelings. His was fitted for all mankind, theirs but for a small community. Owing to the internal dissensions of the State, the operation of his system was interrupted for some time after his death, but was revived in precisely the same form, and continues unchanged in its chief points for many centuries, thus excelling that of Greece in permanency.

Tara became deserted as a royal residence in the sixth century, and some earthen ramparts and mounds are all that now remain of its ancient magnificence. The circumstance which caused its abandonment by the Kings was as follows:

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Dermot, monarch of Ireland, having taken prisoner and punished a brother, or relative, of St. Ruadhan, or Rodanus, who was abbot of Loдра, now Loira, in the county of Tipperary, St. Rodanus "laid a curse on Tara", and, after the death of the monarch Diarmot, A. D. 565, no other king resided there.

Many years, indeed centuries, have passed by since the events narrated in this paper occurred, and many have been its experiences, not a few of them sad. Surely there are none but wish success and prosperity to it and its people under their new form of government, in the hope that some part of its former greatness may return to Ireland.

H. M. M. Richards.

NOTE:—Acknowledgments of the author are due John O'Hart, of Dublin, the learned author of "Irish Pedigrees", for material in this paper, which has been culled from his great work.





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